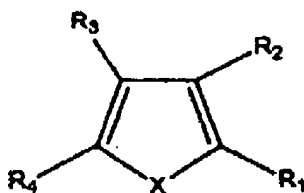


**In the Claims:**

Please cancel claims 1-18 and add new claims 19-29 as follows.

19 (new). A method for treating sickle cell disease in a patient in need thereof, comprising the step of administering to said patient a compound of the formula:



wherein

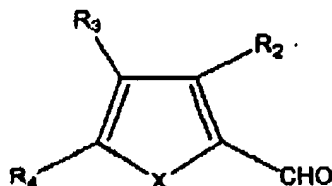
R1 is CHO or an aldehyde protecting thiozolidine group;

R2, R3 and R4 are the same or different and selected from the group consisting of H, OH, alkyl, halogen and hydroxyl-alkyl; and

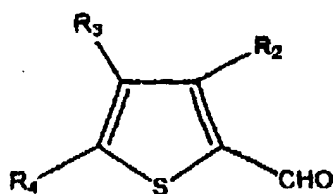
X= O or S;

and wherein said compound is administered in sufficient amount to said patient to ameliorate sickle cell disease.

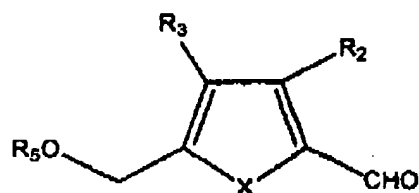
20(new). The method of claim 19, wherein R1 is CHO; R2 and R3 = H; R4 is H, alkyl or hydroxyalkyl; and X =O and the general formula of the compound is:



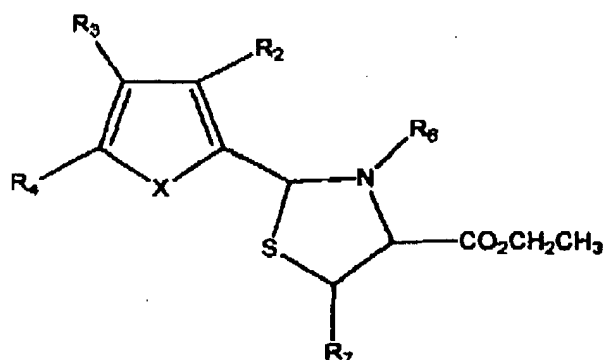
21(new). The method of claim 20, wherein R1 is CHO; R2 and R3 = H; R4 is H, alkyl or hydroxyalkyl; and X =S and the general formula of the compound is:



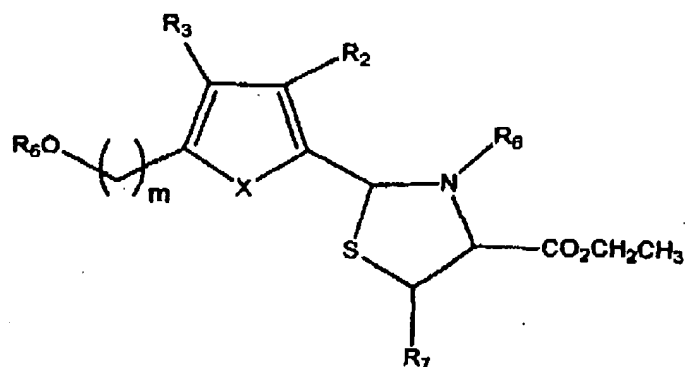
22(new). The method of claim 20, wherein R<sub>1</sub> is CHO; R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> = H; R<sub>4</sub> is hydroxymethyl; and X = O and the general formula of the compound is:



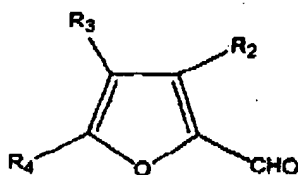
23(new). The method of claim 19, wherein R<sub>1</sub> is a heterocyclic thiazolidine ring; R<sub>2</sub>, R<sub>3</sub> = H; R<sub>4</sub> is alkyl or O-alkyl; R<sub>6</sub> and R<sub>7</sub> = H; and X = O and the general formula of the compound is:



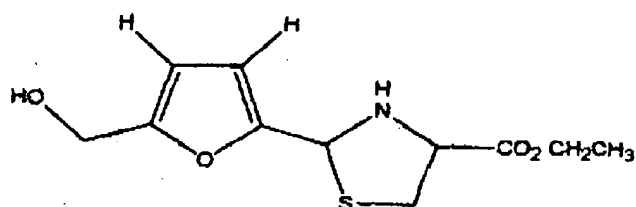
24(new). The method of claim 23, wherein R<sub>1</sub> is a thiazolidine ring, R<sub>2</sub> and R<sub>3</sub> = H; R<sub>4</sub> is hydroxymethyl; m = 1; and R<sub>6</sub> and R<sub>7</sub> = H, and the general formula of the compound is:



25(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is selected from the group consisting of



and



26(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-hydroxymethyl-2-furaldehyde.

27(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 2-(5-hydroxymethyl-furan-2-yl)-thiazolidine-4-carboxylic acid ethyl ester.

28(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-methyl-furaldehyde.

29(new). The method of claim 19, wherein said compound is 5-ethyl-furaldehyde.